



DESIGN RED DEFINED



This is what interior design looks like when you throw out conformity and opt for the unexpected. Two top Atlanta-based design firms share how they create interiors that break the rules beautifully.

BY SUZANNA PALMER



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Kandrak & Kole is a nationally recognized interior design firm founded by principal designers Joann Kandrak and Kelly Kole in 2005. This successful duo is known for residential and commercial designs that break the mold, usually involving unapologetic use of color and innovative custom designs. Voted one of Atlanta's Top 20 Residential Interior Designers by the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, their work has been featured on HGTV, as well as in *The New York Times*, *House Beautiful*, *Southern Lady Magazine*, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, *Atlanta Home Improvement*, *Better Homes & Gardens* and *Houzz.com*.

WHAT MAKES YOU STAND OUT IN THE DESIGN CROWN? We believe in the power of a subtle element of surprise. Our signature style is clean lines with lots of custom furniture, draperies and art, plus layers of color, texture and patterns. We also LOVE wallpaper – preferably in small spaces like powder rooms, foyers and laundry rooms.

WHAT'S THE MOST UNUSUAL PROJECT YOU'VE EVER DONE?

There's not much we won't tackle! We once restored the interior of a dilapidated RV that a client wanted to turn into a mobile fashion boutique. The final design was a success, complete with dressing rooms, clothing displays and an outside wrap that looked fantastic.

A WELL-DESIGNED HOME SHOULD REFLECT ... The likes, dislikes, dreams, goals, lifestyle and travels of those living in the space.

HIT US WITH SOME REAL TALK ON WHY INTERIOR DESIGNERS ARE WORTH THEIR WAGES. Designing the interior of your home is an investment. The whole process, from space planning to choosing paint colors and fabrics, can be very intimidating. We suggest our clients invest in one to three rooms at a time that are designed to perfection instead of spending money putting a band-aid on several items throughout the house that don't have an overall noticeable effect.

YOU KNOW YOU'VE NAILED IT WITH A DESIGN WHEN YOU HEAR ... "Wow! I would have never made these choices, but this design is SO me and I LOVE it."





SWATCHPOP!
SWATCHPOP.COM



Founded by Metro Atlanta residents Jessica McRae and Kristen Yonson, SwatchPop! is the first and only website that matches clients directly with professional interior designers to solve specific decorating dilemmas in their home – all digitally. Clients receive fast, affordable and actionable design solutions straight to their inbox in three business days, with a shopping list included! SwatchPop's "a la carte" service menu starts at just \$49.95 and allows clients to seek advice for large and small projects alike. This innovative design approach has earned SwatchPop! thousands of clients from all across the country.

WHAT'S THE FIRST STEP A HOMEOWNER SHOULD TAKE WHEN TRYING TO RETHINK A ROOM? Simplify! We tend to accumulate an excess of decor over the years, and it ends up crowding our space. Ask yourself, "Would I buy this again?" If the answer is "no," toss it. Then, get professional advice after you declutter for a fresh perspective. You'll step out of your comfort zone and discover something new.

NO HOME SHOULD BE WITHOUT ... Greenery and botanicals. Fresh or faux, they liven up a space and add color.

WHAT'S THE SECRET TO ESCAPING A DESIGN RUT? Snap some photos! There's something about looking at your space on a screen that allows you to see things from a new perspective. You'll be surprised by the things that jump out at you, both good and bad.

A FAVORITE PROJECT TO DATE IS ... A historic home in Athens turned modern farmhouse. We helped make over her entire home in about three weeks using our online experience. She submitted her projects room-by-room with some rooms needing just the finishing touches and others starting from scratch. The results were amazing.



WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO AVOID THAT "PULLED STRAIGHT FROM THE CATALOG" AESTHETIC? Mix objects of various size, shape and texture to achieve a layered "designer" look. Also, vary your sources. Our designers draw ideas from hundreds of sources and send the shopping links directly to our clients, including handmade items on Etsy!

BEST. DESIGN. TIP. EVER? Keep your major pieces neutral for a timeless look, and then accessorize with fun pieces that reflect your current style but can be swapped out easily. Also remember: less is more.